

Watershed Walk

Post Lesson Two/SS

Time: 45 minute

Age: Grades 3-5

Setting: Outdoors

Standards:

Environment and Ecology

Watersheds and Wetlands

4.1.7.B: Understand the role of the watershed.

Environmental Health

4.3.7.A: Identify environmental health issues.

4.3.7.B: Describe how human events affect the health of the environment.

Humans and the Environment

4.8.7.C: Explain how human activities may affect local, regional, and national environments.

Geography

Basic Geographic Literacy

7.1.3.A: Identify geographic tools and their uses.

7.1.6.A: Describe geographic tools and their uses.

7.1.3.B: Identify and locate places and regions.

7.1.6.B: Describe and locate places and regions.

The Physical Characteristics of Places and Regions

7.2.3.A: Identify the physical characteristics of places and regions.

7.2.6A: Describe the physical characteristics of places and regions.

Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening

Speaking and Listening

1.6.5.D: Contribute to discussions.

Objectives:

Students assess their school grounds to look for ways that the school protects and/or pollutes the local watershed.

Overview:

Students perform a visual assessment of their schoolyard and mark the information on their map.

Materials:

Student maps from previous activity

Procedure:

1. Review the activities and maps from “Going with the Flow” activity. Return maps to students. Provide each student with journal or blank paper.
2. Explain to students that they will be going outside to take a closer look at their local watershed. Remind students of any guidelines that you may have regarding behavior in the outdoors.
3. Take students outdoors. Have them walk around the school grounds and answer the following questions:
 - a. Is most of the land open space or developed?
 - b. How is the open space used? Indicate on the map the location of the open space and how it is used (parkland, golf course, etc.)
 - c. Draw on the map locations of trees, shrubs, herbaceous plants and grass.
 - d. Is any type of chemical treatment used to maintain the lawn?
 - e. Are there many roads or places covered with concrete? Draw these on the map.
 - f. How are the developed areas used? Draw these on the map.
 - g. Indicate on the map where rain can soak into the soil after it rains and where it might run off after a rain. Is there more area for the rain to soak in or run off?
 - h. Take a look at the rooftops that you see. Are there many? Are the sloped or flat? Where does the water go when it rains on the rooftops? Draw any downspouts that you see on your map.
 - i. Do you see any storm sewer areas? Draw these on the map. Mark if they are clean or cluttered with litter.
 - j. Mark other litter that you see on your map. Also note any areas where oil may be leaking, or other forms of pollutants.
4. Bring the students together in a circle for discussion. Have them share their pictures and notes and discuss the health of the local watershed based on their observations of the school campus and surrounding areas. What observations that they made might point to a problem?
5. Discuss how, while it may seem as if the small area in which the campus resides would only have a small impact on water quality and watershed health, all the pieces are connected into a big puzzle. Remind them of the accumulation of pollutants in the activity at Nixon Park.

Evaluation:

Have students draw a map of the campus that would depict a healthy watershed. The map should reflect the knowledge gained from the discussions in the activity.